



United States Department of Agriculture  
Food and Nutrition Service

Southeast Region

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**Reply to**

**Attn. of:** SERO Policy

May 24, 2002

**Subject:** CACFP Policy Memorandum 226.20-25: Obligation of Child Care Centers and Family Day Care Homes to Offer Infant Meals in the Child and Adult Care Food Program

**To:** All State Directors  
Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)  
Southeast Region

This memorandum clarifies that child care centers and family day care homes participating in CACFP must offer program meals to all eligible children who are enrolled for care in their facilities. We are providing this explanation to ensure that all children, including infants, who are enrolled for childcare have access to CACFP meals.

A facility may not avoid this obligation by stating that the infants are not “enrolled” in CACFP or by citing some logistical or cost barrier to offering an infant meal. Decisions on offering program meals must be based on whether the child is enrolled for care, not whether the child is enrolled for CACFP. Section 226.2 of the CACFP regulations defines an enrolled child as “a child whose parent or guardian has submitted to an institution a signed document which indicates that the child is enrolled for child care.”

As long as the infant is in care during the meal service period, the facility must offer the infant a meal that complies with program requirements. As with all children in CACFP facilities, an infant’s parent or guardian may decline what is offered and supply the infant’s meals instead. The key factor is that the infant must be provided access to CACFP meals.

We are aware that there are States that are not currently following this policy. Please be advised that all State agencies must ensure that their CACFP institutions and facilities come into compliance within a reasonable amount of time. If you have any questions about this memorandum, please contact our office.

CHARLIE SIMMONS  
Regional Director  
Special Nutrition Programs